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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 35th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 126: PATTERN OF CONFERENCES (continued) (A/C.5/48/L.8*)

Draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.8*

1. Mr. KABIR (Bangladesh), Rapporteur, introducing the draft resolution on which consensus had been reached in informal consultations, recommended its adoption without a vote.

2. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria), supported by Mrs. GRAHAM (United States of America), speaking on a point of clarification, said that draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.8* reflected the calendar of conferences as approved by the Committee on Conferences in annex I of document A/48/32/Rev.1. After the Fifth Committee had completed its consideration of the calendar of conferences in informal consultations, the Committee on Conferences had received additional proposals on the draft calendar of conferences. Since her delegation had difficulty with some of those proposals, it was prepared to adopt the draft resolution on the understanding that the additional proposals would be considered by the Committee on Conferences at a later date and that the changes to the draft calendar of conferences would not be included in the Fifth Committee's report to the General Assembly.

3. Footnote 2 of the draft resolution should be amended to read "A/48/32/Rev.1, annex I".

4. Draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.8*, as orally revised, was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued) (A/48/6, A/48/7, A/48/16 (Part I and Part II) and A/48/32/Rev.1/Add.1; A/C.5/48/9 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and A/C.5/48/26)

First reading

Part IV. International cooperation for development (continued)

Part V. Regional cooperation for development (continued)

5. Mr. JADMANI (Pakistan) said that the restructuring of the Organization's economic and social sectors had been undertaken to redress the fragmentation of the structures of those sectors, provide a clearer focus for various components in the economic and social fields and achieve economies of scale. With respect to the economies of scale, the savings realized through the process of restructuring should be utilized in the respective field of activity and not be diverted to cover the expenses of the Organization's other activities.

6. With the resource growth in the economic field almost at the level of the previous biennium and the increase in activity anticipated in that field, his delegation hoped that the proposed level of resources resulting from the restructuring of the Secretariat would ensure the implementation of activities

(Mr. Jadmani, Pakistan)

in the economic field. Moreover, the proposed programme budget should have allocated additional resources to meet the needs of the comprehensive programme for development.

7. Adequate resources were needed for developing countries that were implementing far-reaching economic reforms and liberalization measures. In particular, the desperate situation in Africa required urgent attention. A net flow of official development assistance (ODA) should be used for the eradication of poverty, human and social development programmes and measures to promote sustainable development in developing countries. In that regard, the Secretary-General's proposals on the subject should be approved.

8. The allocations proposed for the three new departments in the economic and social field should be authorized in order to ensure their proper functioning. If the desired objectives were to be achieved, coordination between the departments was essential. It was important to delineate the responsibilities of each department and define their relationship with the various agencies and funds of the United Nations system that were active in the economic field. The departments should complement, not compete with, each other.

9. His delegation shared the concerns expressed by the representative of Egypt with regard to the funding of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, in particular the resource allocation for the forthcoming International Conference on Population and Development. The Department should provide a link between the various departments and bodies at Headquarters and the regional commissions. His delegation was in favour of an analysis and evaluation of the Department's activities and therefore supported the Secretary-General's proposal in subprogramme 5 of section 9.

10. His delegation shared the concern expressed by the representative of China that the level of resources for the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) was not commensurate with the Commission's expanded workload.

11. Mr. DAMICO (Brazil) said that his delegation fully supported the recommendation of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) on the need for enhanced coordination among the three new departments, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the regional commissions, as well as for a clear division of labour among their various units. Part IV was not presented in the context of a long-term plan or framework for the restructuring of international cooperation for development, and his delegation hoped that the launching of an agenda for development would help overcome that shortcoming.

12. The Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development required adequate services and resources for the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis should improve coordination with the regional commissions and the Secretariat should provide additional information

(Mr. Damico, Brazil)

on the economic and social information system. His delegation supported the comments made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) concerning the incorporation of the Office for Project Services (OPS) into the Department for Development Support and Management Services.

13. With regard to UNCTAD, his delegation regretted that clearly identifiable units had not yet been established to deal separately with science and technology for development and transnational corporations. His delegation supported the view of ACABQ that the Secretariat should report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/212 B (III). In addition, a corrigendum should be issued to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 in order to amend the title of programme 17 to "Science and technology for development", and that of subprogramme 1 to "Endogenous capacity-building and resource mobilization".

14. With respect to the International Trade Centre, his delegation drew attention to General Assembly resolution 47/212 B, which called for the prompt appointment of an Executive Director of the International Trade Centre.

15. Finally, with regard to Part V, his delegation looked forward to the Secretary-General's report of the Secretary-General on decentralization.

16. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) said that his delegation strongly supported effective coordination among the three new departments. His delegation was not in favour of the exclusion of the regional commissions from certain across-the-board reductions, since by their very nature such reductions could not be selective.

17. It seemed that more than 95 per cent of business travel in North America was booked on coach or discount fares and that the choice of lodging had been reduced considerably to include mostly budget and economy hotels. The Secretariat should explore the possibility of following that practice and should report on its findings in due course.

18. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that the Secretariat should inform the Committee on the status of negotiations or actions with a view to incorporating OPS into the Department for Development Support and Management Services. Likewise, the Chairman of ACABQ should inform the Committee whether any negotiations had been held or any specific recommendations had been made on that important issue.

19. Her delegation regretted the decrease in extrabudgetary resources for activities in the economic and social fields. The Secretariat should consider the possibility of financing certain posts that were currently financed from extrabudgetary resources, from the regular budget, particularly in the case of section 4, where specific proposals on the subject had been made.

20. With reference to paragraphs 10.26 to 10.28 of section 10, her delegation considered that paragraph 10.28 was superfluous and should be eliminated in so far as it reiterated the request made in paragraph 10.26.

21. Mr. VARELA (Chile) said that his delegation fully supported the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (A/48/16 (Parts I and II)) and attached particular importance to the work of CPC and ACABQ in the budgetary process. It also agreed with the statement by the Group of 77. If necessary, greater flexibility could be achieved through dialogue but should not be sought by relaxing budgetary procedures and regulations. In that connection, his delegation welcomed initiatives to improve the United Nations system in accordance with existing regulations and with the participation of all Member States.

22. Given the scope and complexity of economic and social assistance and cooperation it was necessary to take a long-term view during the budget exercise. Human resources must be strengthened, even though it might seem a waste of scarce financial resources. His delegation therefore had difficulty understanding the Advisory Committee's recommendation (A/48/7, para. IV.18) that the proposed additional posts for activities in micro-economic issues should be deleted, particularly since it seemed that assistance to the developing world in micro-economic issues would be more necessary than ever. It would also have difficulty agreeing with paragraph IV.25 concerning the reduction of financial resources for an event as significant as the International Conference on Population and Development. It shared the concerns of the Egyptian delegation and would appreciate more information in that regard.

23. His delegation supported the view expressed by the Colombian representative concerning paragraph IV.38, which recommended a reduction in financial resources allocated to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). It was reassured by the Controller's statements regarding coordination among the three departments in the economic and social sector as a result of the restructuring exercise. His delegation also supported the strengthening of activities in the regional commissions. It was deeply concerned by the decrease in extrabudgetary resources allocated to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the impact that would have on the Commission's activities during the biennium 1994-1995. The Secretariat's assessment of the potential impact would be appreciated.

24. The fact that an Executive Director of the International Trade Centre had still not been appointed gave cause for concern. As the Centre played a valuable role in promoting more just and equitable trade with nations, his delegation noted with satisfaction the Controller's remarks and trusted that expediting the appointment process would prove effective. In conclusion, while his delegation advocated budgetary discipline, it none the less understood that the Organization's heightened responsibilities in the promotion of economic and social development called for a corresponding increase in resources for that sector.

25. Mr. JU Kuilin (China) said that the Chinese translation referred to the Executive Director of Habitat as an assistant secretary-general post, when it should have been under-secretary-general and requested a correction.

26. Ms. SAEKI (Japan) said that her delegation supported the views of CPC and the Advisory Committee on the importance of effective coordination and eliminating duplication between the activities of the three new departments established under the restructuring in the economic and social sectors and UNCTAD. It also shared the concern expressed by ACABQ in paragraphs IV.6 and IV.7 about the proliferation of ad hoc secretariats for intergovernmental bodies and the costs of international conferences. In that connection, the Advisory Committee's recommendations contained in paragraphs IV.12 and IV.14 concerning the criteria for inviting individuals to conferences and the staff requirements for conferences, respectively, were appropriate. Her delegation also believed that substantial cost reductions could be achieved by streamlining the United Nations publications in the social and economic fields. There was potential for duplication between the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis and the activities of the other two departments in the economic and social sectors, UNCTAD, and the Bretton Woods institutions. The Department must focus on its areas of strength in order to achieve a more effective and economical utilization of resources. Her delegation also supported the reduction proposed in paragraph IV.21 of the ACABQ report.

27. Until such time as the issue of transferring the Office for Project Services (OPS) had been settled, the budget of the Department for Development Support and Management Services could not be considered. If the issue took time to settle, the interim situation would have to be dealt with in the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the case of OPS and in the General Assembly in the case of the Department.

28. Reductions could be made in UNCTAD in the area of consultants and experts and publications. No clear explanation had been given on how the transfer of programmes on transnational corporations and science and technology to UNCTAD had resulted in economies of scale. Her delegation requested the Secretary-General to review the posts and resources mentioned in paragraph IV.41 of the Advisory Committee's report. Japan attached importance to United Nations activities in the field of crime prevention and control. In that connection, the administrative support mechanism and the role of the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna must be strengthened and streamlined.

29. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), replying to Committee members' questions concerning restructuring and reorganization, noted that as the Secretary-General had indicated to the Committee on 24 November, the Secretariat was entering a phase of consolidation, in which new structures must be given time to work. The report of the Secretary-General on high-level posts (A/C.5/48/9) should be viewed in the context of that consolidation. The report outlined the Secretary-General's response to concerns expressed by Member States on the basis of the revised estimates. It was important for the Committee to approve the Secretary-General's proposal for the 1994-1995 biennium. Major changes in the Secretary-General's proposals contained in the budget fascicle would create difficulties.

30. Replying to a question concerning decentralization, he said that programmes on natural resources and energy were still pending. Despite great efforts, it had been impossible to complete the inter-secretariat review, which covered departments at United Nations Headquarters, UNCTAD, the United Nations

Environment Programme (UNEP) and the regional commissions, each of which had their own views concerning programming and resources. The comprehensive inter-secretariat review would be expedited and it would fully take into account the views expressed by the General Assembly. The results would be presented through CPC.

31. Replying to the Cuban representative, he referred to the report of the Secretary-General on restructuring (A/C.5/47/88, para. 26), which indicated that the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development would be responsible for the preparation of an annual policy report. The report was intended to present integrated and policy-oriented views on the world state of affairs in the social and economic sectors for consideration by Member States. It would draw on various sectoral surveys and reports prepared by the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, UNCTAD, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNEP. Replying to another question by the Cuban representative, he said that, at its resumed substantive session of 1993, the Economic and Social Council had decided that the Committee for Development Planning should meet for three days in January 1994. At the same time, the Council had before it a draft resolution calling for a Group of Experts on Development to replace the Committee for Development Planning. That would have no programme budget implications. Replying to the Cuban query concerning the proposed grant for non-governmental liaison offices, he said that the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) had approved the activities of the liaison offices as a project of the United Nations system and that the cost would be shared among participating organizations. A broader mandate was contained in General Assembly resolution 37/94 B on questions relating to information. In addition, many delegations had noted that Agenda 21 contained a special chapter on the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in United Nations activities.

32. Replying to a question on how the functions of the former Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation were reflected in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, he said that those functions relating to overall policy coordination, in particular coordination and implementation of major United Nations declarations, were programmed in paragraphs 8.44, 8.48, 8.49 and 8.50 under section 8 on the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. Those functions relating to the coordination of activities of the United Nations system, including support to ACC, were programmed in paragraphs 8.87 to 8.89. Operational activities were also programmed in paragraphs 8.87 to 8.89. Issues relating to Africa in the context of programme 45 of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 were programmed in paragraphs 8.128 to 8.132. Coordination of issues relating to hunger and malnutrition was programmed in paragraphs 8.51 and 8.52.

33. Replying to the Chinese inquiry concerning budgeting for desertification programmes, he said that desertification programmes under resolution 47/188 had been approved for one year. Non-post resources had been budgeted for 1994 only but, through redeployment, four Professional and six General Service posts had

(Mr. Takasu)

been budgeted for two years, making it possible to begin work in the current biennium. Approval was being sought on the basis of the Secretary-General's original proposal.

34. The Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis was continuing its existing activities and launching new activities at the same time. The six posts requested were for the Department's newly emerging activities based on General Assembly resolutions 47/171 and 47/187. The Advisory Committee was suggesting that the activities should be carried out through redeployment of existing posts (para. IV.18), but, in fact those six posts had already been redeployed during the current biennium. The request was being made in order to regularize the situation in the biennium 1994-1995. Obviously, an evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of those activities should be conducted, but any disruption of work would be most unfortunate.

35. Activities pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/215 were not included among the activities proposed in paragraph 9.32 for implementation by the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis. The Second Committee was currently considering a draft resolution which requested the Department to carry out follow-up activities in that area. The activities proposed in paragraph 9.30 included research and analysis on micro-economic issues, while the activities proposed in section 10 in the context of programme 21 (public administration and finance) of the medium-term plan, which dealt basically with technical cooperation activities in relation to micro-economic activities. That division of labour had been approved by the General Assembly in the context of its review of document A/C.5/47/88. Replying to a question on increases in furniture and equipment in table 9.8 of section 9, he said that the resources would finance the cost of equipment for the United Nations economic and social information system (UNESIS), on which work had already begun in 1993, in addressing information and data issues in the social and economic sectors in an integrated manner, while maximizing the utilization of existing hardware resources. The system would require some specialized equipment in addition to normal maintenance and re-equipment of specific programmatic activities. The reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee would adversely affect the implementation of the information system and, consequently, the statistical services that could be provided to Member States.

36. The Secretariat was in general agreement with the observations made concerning the transfer of OPS from UNDP. However, many months had passed since the transfer had first been proposed and a great deal of technical work had been done in that connection. All the institutional administrative arrangements were complete and the transfer was scheduled to take place in January. Every effort had been made to ensure that OPS would enjoy the same flexibility in the United Nations as it had in UNDP. Postponing the transfer would have an adverse effect on the activities of OPS and would not help to clarify outstanding technical issues. In fact, those issues could not be resolved until the transfer had taken place.

37. Replying to another question, he said that in the new staffing table for the Department for Development Support and Management Services, the programme on

energy and natural resources would be carried out by the Division for Development Policies and Planning. In his latest report (A/C.5/48/9 and Add.1), the Secretary-General was proposing to transfer the D-2 post to the Department of Administration and Management within the framework of the proposed adjustment.

38. Referring to posts shown under the programmes on transnational corporations and science and technology in section 11A, he said that a comparison between the number of posts and the level of resources allocated to the former Centres on Transnational Corporations and the Centre for Science and Technology for Development and those contained in section 11A could be misleading, for it did not take into account the redistribution of resources of the two former Centres during the first phase of the restructuring of the former Department of Economic and Social Development. During the second phase of the restructuring, a number of posts under those programmes were subsequently redeployed from the former Department of Economic and Social Development to departments other than UNCTAD. The overall level of resources proposed by the Secretary-General in section 11A for the two programmes had been determined after a careful review in order to ensure the full and effective implementation of those programmes. Referring to the administration of the programmes within UNCTAD, he said that the newly established Transnational Corporations, Technology and Investment Division provided for the maintenance of distinct units within UNCTAD. The organizational framework was designed to help eliminate duplication and certain weaknesses in programmes owing to fragmentation. The assignment of other closely related activities to the same Division would enhance the quality of the programmes delivered.

39. Many delegations had expressed the hope that an Executive Director of the International Trade Centre would be appointed promptly. The Secretary-General was undertaking a review of the Centre's programmes and administrative practices and the decision would be announced shortly.

40. Replying to questions concerning the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), he stressed that the budgets of Habitat and UNEP were administered separately, and that the two agencies would maintain their separate identities and have distinct senior management. As their activities were closely related, it had been determined that joint programming could result in maximum programmatic and administrative advantages.

41. The Secretariat shared the concern of many delegations about the impact of the declining level of extrabudgetary resources on the programmes of the regional commissions, in particular the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The problem stemmed from both the reorganization of the operational activities of the organs of the United Nations and the general decline in budgetary resources. The General Assembly had always maintained a strict policy concerning the absorption of extrabudgetary shortfalls by the regular budget. The proposal in section 4 concerning the financing of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations from both the regular budget and the Support Account for Peace-keeping Operations was not related to the issue at hand.

(Mr. Takasu)

42. Concerning ECA in particular, he said that measures had been taken to increase assistance to the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) and to guarantee the stability of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) and the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI).

43. Regarding the steps taken in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/67, he said that they were outlined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the statement on programme budget implications contained in document A/C.2/48/L.82. In particular, under section 20 of the proposed programme budget, a provision of $729,800 had been proposed for activities in the area of statistics. That would be utilized for building the institutional and technical capabilities of member countries (para. 20.51) and for the organization and management of data-processing and information systems development. It represented an increase over the 1992-1993 level of resources.

44. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said her delegation said that the approach taken in paragraph 9.30 of the proposed programme budget did not deal with all of the programmes under Agenda 21. She would take the matter up in informal consultations and hoped that the Secretariat would be able to make specific proposals at that time to rectify the situation.

45. Cuba attached great importance to the activities carried out by UNCTAD as well as those relating to science and technology and it had therefore been concerned to hear of staff reductions in those areas. It would like to receive written information concerning the situation with respect to UNCTAD resources and posts at the end of the first phase of restructuring and at the end of the second phase. While it had taken note of the Controller's comments, her delegation saw no apparent justification for the very meagre budgetary increases in those areas.

46. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) asked for clarification of how coordination was to be achieved among the three new departments. He also requested a preliminary answer to the question he had raised previously regarding the use of coach and economy fares for regular and peace-keeping travel.

47. Mr. NDOBOLI (Uganda) expressed concern at the absence of any provision for travel by delegations from the least developed countries to the regional congresses to be held in preparation for the Ninth Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

48. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), replying to the questions raised by the representative of the Netherlands, said that a first meeting of the three department heads had been held and that weekly meetings were planned. Coordination was also taking place on a day-to-day basis. With respect to travel arrangements, he said that the Secretariat continued to review the situation.

(Mr. Takasu)

49. Replying to the representative of Uganda, he said it was his understanding that provisions for such travel were included in paragraph 13.10 of the programme budget.

50. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should suspend its consideration of parts IV and V, and that decisions thereon and on the relevant recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination should be taken at a later state.

51. It was so decided.

Part VI. Human rights and humanitarian affairs

52. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the total estimates proposed by the Secretary-General for Part VI came to $128,770,100, while the Advisory Committee had recommended appropriations totalling $120,408,200.

53. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) pointed out that, in connection with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the budget included a provision for the transfer of two posts from extrabudgetary to budgetary resources. That was one of the very few exceptions made in the proposed programme budget to the general rule of avoiding that practice. The Secretary-General had requested 25 additional posts for the newly created department, but the Advisory Committee had not approved the establishment of some of its key posts. He wished to emphasize the great importance the Secretary-General attached to the work of the Department and to convey his request that the General Assembly approve the establishment of the posts.

54. Mr. STÖCKL (Rapporteur, Committee for Programme and Coordination) drew attention to paragraphs 175-206 of the Committee's report (A/48/16 (Part II)) noting that the Committee had stressed the importance of the work of UNRWA and recommended approval of the relevant proposals in the programme budget and of the programme narrative relating to humanitarian affairs.

55. Mr. MADDENS (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, and noting that promotion of respect for human rights was one of the principal tasks of the United Nations and that the General Assembly had specifically requested the Secretary-General, in resolution 47/213, to give particular attention to certain priority areas, including human rights, said that the Secretary-General's proposals were an initial step in the right direction. However, given the substantial increase in the workload of the Centre for Human Rights, the proposals, while significant in terms of percentage growth, were inadequate for, in dollar terms, they represented only one third of 1 per cent of the budget proposals currently being considered. Taken as a whole, the section itself represented a mere 1.5 per cent of the overall budget. Moreover, only 6 of the 27 Professional posts being proposed were actually new. The European Union therefore urged all Member States to support the Secretary-General's proposals and to endorse, in the General Assembly, his proposal to increase the resources allocated to the Centre in the proposed programme budget.

(Mr. Maddens, Belgium)

56. The European Union looked forward to seeing the results of the World Conference on Human Rights and of the discussions currently under way in other forums reflected in the budget proposals.

57. Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon) said that the reasons the Advisory Committee had given for rejecting the Secretary-General's proposals regarding the staffing of the Department for Humanitarian Affairs were not convincing, and pointed out that the number of issues being dealt with by the Department had expanded considerably in recent years.

58. Mr. LOZINSKY (Russian Federation) said that the Secretary-General's proposals relating to the staffing of the Department for Humanitarian Affairs seemed justified inter alia because the new Department represented a consolidation of three units.

59. Ms. ROEDSMOEN (Norway), speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries, said that the Nordic countries attached great importance to the work of the United Nations in promoting universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Given that the demands placed on the Organization in that area were increasing, and that the recent World Conference on Human Rights had inter alia requested the Secretary-General to substantially increase the resources allocated to human rights programmes, it was a matter of concern to the Nordic countries that a number of programmes within the Centre for Human Rights, continued to suffer from a lack of adequate resources. Indeed, less than 1 per cent of the regular budget was currently allocated to the Centre.

60. The Nordic countries welcomed the efforts currently under way to streamline and rationalize the Centre. In view of the substantial increase in the Centre's workload, the Secretary-General's proposed increase for that section represented a bare minimum of what was required. The Nordic countries were prepared to support much larger increases than those currently proposed and they fully endorsed the recommendation of the Committee for Programme and Coordination that the increased responsibility and workload of the Centre should be matched by an increase in resources. It was regrettable that ACABQ had been unable to make specific recommendations on the matter. However the Nordic countries urged Member States to at least support the Secretary-General's proposals. Such support would be consistent with the resolution on the strengthening of the Centre which the Third Committee had adopted by consensus a few days previously (A/C.3/48/L.49).

61. The United Nations must respond without delay to the strongly felt international concerns in the area of human rights and corresponding additional resources must be provided as a matter of urgency. It was a matter of concern that, even with the proposed increases, the Centre would find it very difficult in the years ahead to fulfil the vitally important tasks which Member States had entrusted to it.

62. Turning to section 22A concerning the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), she expressed the view that the contribution to UNHCR from the Organization's regular budget represented the universal

(Mr. Roedsmoen, Norway)

commitment of Member States to the statute and mandate of the Office of the High Commissioner. The Nordic countries were convinced that the Secretary-General's proposal to transfer two UNHCR posts in least developed countries from voluntary funding to the regular budget was appropriate and fully justifiable.

63. There was need for greater predictability in the financial situation of UNHCR, since the current uncertainty led to an ad hoc approach to assisting refugees and prevented the financing of long-term, durable solutions. The Nordic countries believed that regular budget funding would benefit the Office of the High Commissioner to a greater extent than would voluntary funding, and, given the increasingly complex activities which UNHCR was being required to undertake, they would have been prepared to support an immediate transfer of all of the 17 posts referred to in the Secretary-General's budget proposals.

64. Mr. ELZIMAITY (Egypt) said that there was need for greater balance between the elimination of poverty and support for human rights programmes. In that connection, his delegation was still awaiting a reply to its question concerning the volume of resources to be allocated to those United Nations agencies involved in combating poverty. In his view, the recommendation of ACABQ concerning the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) would have a negative impact on the work of that department. His delegation therefore supported the Secretary-General's proposals which would permit DHA to effectively discharge its important responsibilities.

65. Mr. KOULERA (Ukraine) said that his delegation supported the draft proposals of the Secretary-General concerning the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

66. Mr. NDOBOLI (Uganda) supported the views expressed by the representative of Egypt on the need to balance the elimination of poverty and human rights activities. Although Uganda attached great value to human rights, it could not help but notice the extremely generous allocation of resources for human rights activities contained in the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget. He wished once again to stress the need for similar increases in the allocation of resources to combat poverty and promote development.

67. Mr. DJACTA (Algeria) said that his delegation attached great importance to the activities of DHA, and particularly its coordinating role. It therefore believed that the recommendation of ACABQ to reduce the number of posts proposed by the Secretary-General for that Department would have a negative impact on its functioning.

The meeting rose at 5.45.p.m.